

Message Text

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ACTION SY-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 NEA-05 ISO-00 L-03 OC-06 CCO-00 TRSE-00

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R 181349Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3705

INFO AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL ZURICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2959

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ASEC

SUBJ: SMUGGLING CASE

REF: FRANKFURT 2162(NOTAL)

1. RSO MET WITH HEAD, CUSTOMS INSPECTION UNIT, ON APRIL 17. PROGRESS OF CASE WAS DISCUSSED AND RSO PASSED SUBSTANCE OF REFTTEL WHICH REVEALED ORIGIN OF FIVE SHIPMENTS TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA FROM AMCONSULATE FRANKFURT COULD NOT BE TRACED FURTHER THAN ZURICH AND IDENTITY OF INDIVIDUALS RESPONSIBLE FOR SHIPMENTS COULD NOT BE DETERMINED IN GERMANY AS SHIPMENTS WERE MADE FROM SHIPPING AGENT IN ZURICH TO SHIPPING AGENT IN FRANKFURT.

2. RSO ALSO PASSED COPIES OF LUFTHANSA AIR WAY BILLS (AWB'S) FOR 3/22/74 FLIGHT FRANKFURT TO ANKARA AND 3/21/74 FLIGHT ZURICH TO FRANKFURT. AWB'S SHOWING CONSIGNOR AS AIRSPED AG, ZURICH, AND CONSIGNEE AS VLD GMBH FRANKFURT, BOTH LEGITIMATE SHIPPING AGENTS, WERE APPRECIATED BY CUSTOMS INSPECTOR WHO CONSIDERS THEM VITAL TO CASE. FRANKFURT'S ASSISTANCE OBTAINING AWB'S APPRECIATED.

3. CUSTOMS INSPECTOR INDICATED THAT HE HAS SENT DIPLOMATIC NOTES THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY TO BOTH GERMAN AND SWISS EMBASSIES IN ANKARA REQUESTING WHATEVER INFORMATION THEY MAY BE ABLE TO
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DEVELOP REGARDING MARCH 21-22 SHIPMENT. CUSTOMS IS PARTICULARLY

INTERESTED IN "EXPORT CUSTOMS DECLARATIONS" ON SHIPMENT. IF RESULTS ARE INCONCLUSIVE HE WILL CONSIDER USE OF INTERPOL.

4. ON APRIL 18, TWO AWB'S MENTIONED PARA 2 AND LIST OF SUSPECT SHIPMENTS DURING 1973 AND 1974 WERE OFFICIALLY FORWARDED TO MINISTRY OF CUSTOMS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AS REQUESTED BY MINISTRY OF CUSTOMS.

5. CUSTOMS INSPECTOR INDICATED THAT HE TENTATIVELY PLANS TO INTERROGATE THREE LOCAL EMBASSY CUSTOMS UNIT EMPLOYEES IN ABOUT TEN DAYS. HE AGAIN REQUESTED THAT EMBASSY NOT FIRE EMPLOYEES PRIOR TO INTERROGATION, ADDING THAT HE WOULD OFFICIALLY ADVISE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO REQUEST THAT WE TERMINATE EMPLOYEES BASED ON RESULTS OF INTERROGATION. HE STATED THAT HIS PERSONAL OPINION WAS THAT ALL THREE LOCAL EMPLOYEES WERE INVOLVED, ADDING THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY ASK DISTRICT ATTORNEY FOR ARREST WARRANTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER INTERROGATIONS UNLESS LOCAL EMPLOYEES ARE ABLE TO CONVINCE CUSTOMS OFFICIALS OF THEIR INNOCENCE. EMPLOYEES WOULD THEN MOST LIKELY BE JAILED WITHOUT BAIL UNTIL COMPLETION OF INVESTIGATION AND TRIAL.

6. CUSTOMS INSPECTOR CONCLUDED BY ADMITTING THAT HE FEELS TURKISH AIRPORT CUSTOMS COMPLICITY IN SMUGGLING OPERATION IS A VERY DISTINCT PROBABILITY AND HOPES THAT INTERROGATION OF EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEES WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION AS TO IDENTITY OF AIRPORT CUSTOMS OFFICIALS WHO MAY BE INVOLVED.
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